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MEMORANDUM FOR: General Cabell

2 October 1956

SUBJECT : Preparatory Meeting with Admiral Radford and
General Twining

The following is my intellectual Last Will and Testament prior to our meeting with Radford and Twining. I am afraid that my views differ at certain points from yours and I hope that you will excuse their rather blunt statements herewith:

25X1C 1. I profoundly hope it can be agreed that guidance will be sought tomorrow not only on access to the main target area but on overflights of [REDACTED] Satellites and on the chances for access to the main target next spring, so that we may chart our course intelligently.

2. In the same vein, I hope guidance will be sought with respect not only to our activity but to those of the Air Force as well. If the Air Force is cleared to operate over second priority areas, I would hope that the same clearance would extend to us, whether you eventually decide to use it or not. In particular, I would urge that you use your influence as far as you feel able at this preparatory meeting to elicit an objective recommendation with respect to the Far East. This will not be easy because General Everest can be depended upon to oppose our entry into that theater while simultaneously supporting operations there by SAC with a lesser capability. More important considerations aside, I question whether anyone can maintain the morale of our people and their sense of urgency if it becomes known that politics of this sort enforce idleness upon us while others with less effective equipment are free to operate. I confess my own disillusionment would in this event be complete.

25X1X4 3. The crucial question is whether the joint recommendation to the President should be in favor of or opposed to operations (logically with the best available equipment) against second priority targets during the next six months, assuming access to the top priority target area is denied. On this you know my opinion. I believe we should ask the political authorities (a) whether there is really a good chance of operations against the primary target next spring and (b) whether a [REDACTED] protest in the meanwhile would gravely prejudice this chance. If the answers to both questions are affirmative, clearly we should stand down as should the Air Force.

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Unless both answers are affirmative I would at least try for permission to get some return on our investment. As things stand at this moment I would be willing to bet somewhere between two and three to one that what is denied to us today will still be denied to us in the spring. Under these circumstances, the result of keeping the car in the garage until better times will merely insure that it becomes obsolete before it is every used at all.

RICHARD M. BISSELL, JR.